

PACIFIC WHITING HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS  
AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR 2008

The Pacific whiting fishery management process is unlike that for other federally-managed west coast groundfish for 2008 fisheries, for which catch specifications and management measures were adopted by the Council at the June 2006 Council meeting for the two-year period 2007-2008. The Council deferred a decision on setting harvest specifications and management measures for the 2008 Pacific whiting fisheries pending the development and review of a new stock assessment to occur during February 2008. A new Pacific whiting assessment was prepared this winter (Agenda Item F.3.a, Attachment 1) and reviewed by a joint U.S.-Canadian assessment review panel during February 2008 (Agenda Item F.3.a, Attachment 2). Additionally, two other assessment documents were provided to the assessment review panel for consideration (Agenda Item F.3.a, Attachments 3 and 4). The executive summaries of each assessment are included in the briefing book and each assessment in its entirety is found in the CD copy of meeting materials. The Council should consider the advice of the assessment review panel, the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), and other advisors before adopting an assessment for use in management decision-making. The assessment, once approved, will be used to set 2008 Pacific whiting harvest specifications and management measures.

In 2004-2007, this transboundary stock was managed jointly with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada, in the spirit of a new process described in a treaty that has been signed and ratified by the U.S., but awaits ratification by Canada. The primary tenets of the treaty include a joint U.S.-Canada annual assessment and management process (which will presumably be implemented next year), a research commitment, and a harvest sharing agreement providing 73.88 percent of the coastwide optimum yield (OY) for U.S. fisheries and 26.12 percent for Canadian fisheries.

The Council is tasked with setting an acceptable biological catch (ABC) and OY for Pacific whiting that will be used to manage 2008 fisheries and management measures to properly prosecute the fishery. Considerations for this decision include the stock's current and projected status with respect to the overfished threshold, the international agreement with Canada, and overfished species' bycatch concerns.

**Council Action:**

- 1. Adopt the 2008 Pacific whiting stock assessment.**
- 2. Adopt a 2008 ABC and OY for Pacific whiting.**
- 3. Adopt 2008 management measures for Pacific whiting fisheries.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.3.a, Attachment 1: Executive Summary of Stock Assessment of Pacific Hake (Whiting) in U.S. and Canadian Waters in 2008.
2. Agenda Item F.3.a, Attachment 2: Report of the 2008 U.S. / Canada Pacific Hake (Whiting) Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel.
3. Agenda Item F.3.a, Attachment 3: Abstract of Canadian Fishery Distribution, Index Analysis, and Virtual Population Analysis of Pacific Hake, 2008.
4. Agenda Item F.3.a, Attachment 4: Executive Summary of Assessment and Management Advice for Pacific Hake in U.S. and Canadian Waters in 2008.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview John DeVore
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt 2008 Stock Assessment, Allowable Biological Catch, Optimum Yield, and Management Measures

PFMC  
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